



Committee on HOMELAND SECURITY

Chairman Peter T. King

Opening Statement

September 14, 2011

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Statement of Chairman Mike Rogers (R-AL)
Subcommittee on Transportation Security

Mark Up of Committee Print
"Transportation Security Administration Authorization Act of 2011"

September 14, 2011
Remarks as Prepared

Sunday marked the 10th anniversary of the cowardly terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. All across our nation, Americans honored the almost 3,000 people that were murdered that day. Some knew them as parents, children, spouses, and brothers and sisters. Others knew them for the first time on that day. But all of us will remember them forever as heroes.

In the time following the attacks, Congress created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). TSA was given the mission of protecting our transportation systems from attack. It is that mission that we are focused on today.

In its first few years, TSA developed a one-size-fits-all approach to security. Effectively refining operations based on a changing threat proved difficult. A large bureaucracy grew around TSA that further made it resistant to change. I firmly believe that TSA needs fundamental reform – TSA should be able to do its mission more effectively and efficiently. This committee print that we are considering today is the first step of this process of reform.

I want to briefly highlight several provisions before we can get down to work.

This print requires TSA for once and for all to implement a risk based approach to passenger screening. Risk based screening is common sense approach and will stop the practice of assuming everyone is a potential terrorist until proven otherwise. It will increase security and expedite travel while ensuring the safe flow of people and commerce.

This print contains several provisions to greatly increase efficiencies and save taxpayers dollars at TSA. It requires a top to bottom review of all TSA operations and organization. It provides a mechanism to recoup the cost of some unused equipment through foreign sale. And I expect that amendments will be offered that will include prudent savings from workforce realignment.

Many of the reforms in this print will have the affect of ensuring accountability at TSA – not only accountability in the way it conducts its mission and spends taxpayer dollars, but also in its workforce. These accountability measures will improve workforce productivity as well as TSA's much maligned public image.

This print properly addresses all modes of transportation under TSA. Whether it is passenger travel or commerce on planes, freight trains, trucks, mass transit, buses, or pipelines – all modes of transportation of passengers and commerce are considered important.

Since I became Chairman, it has been my intent that this subcommittee work together in a bipartisan fashion. Though we have philosophical differences on some issues, we all agree on the importance of security. The Ranking Member, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee, has been excellent in her willingness to work together, her knowledge of the issues, and her overriding dedication to the security of our nation. I commend her on her work and her spirit of bipartisanship. And I look forward to continuing our close working relationship in the future.

Finally, today is not a legislative exercise to me. It is my full intent that this process continues through to the House floor. I hope the Senate will join us in producing a bill on which we can go to conference and finalize. Though

there have been several noble attempts, no TSA reauthorization bill has ever made it through the process. I hope today is the beginning of the first one.

Now let's get down to work.